

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS/3

TAGS: PFOR, SP, IS

SUBJECT: NORMALIZATION OF SPAIN'S RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

1. SUMMARY: AS PROMISED DURING SECRETARY'S VISIT TO ISRAEL, WE APPROACHED SPANISH GOVERNMENT CONCERNING NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. SPANISH INDICATED THAT ALTHOUGH THEY EXPECT TO DO SO AT SOME POINT, RESTORATION OF RELATIONS UNLIKELY UNTIL FURTHER PROGRESS IS ACHIEVED TOWARD MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. RESULTS OF OUR APPROACH SHOULD BE CONVEYED TO GOI. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE SECRETARY'S TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST, THE QUESTION OF THE NORMALIZATION OF SPANISH RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL WAS RAISED BY FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON. ALLON SAID THAT SPAIN, UNDER ARAB PRESSURE, WAS HOLDING BACK ON ITS

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PROMISE TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL. THE SECRETARY SAID WE WOULD SPEAK TO THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT ON THE MATTER.

3. EMBASSY MADRID WAS INSTRUCTED TO RAISE ISSUE WITH SPANISH GOVERNMENT, REFERRING TO EARLIER INDICATIONS OF OVERALL PROCESS OF RENEWING AND ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

4. SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED OUR CHARGE IN MADRID TO DISCUSS SUBJECT WITH UNDER SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SOLANO. IN DOING SO, CHARG OBSERVED THAT PRESENT SPANISH GOVERNMENT SEEMED LESS OPEN TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL THAN THE KING'S FIRST GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN. SOLANO SAID THAT THE CHANGE WAS MORE ONE OF NUANCE THAN OF SUBSTANCE. SPAIN HAD NOTHING AGAINST ISRAEL BUT WANTED TO RESERVE ITS MOVE TOWARDS NORMALIZATION UNTIL THAT MOVE MIGHT HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT TOWARD RESOLUTION OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE. CHARGE POINTED OUT THAT A MOVE TOWARD NORMALIZATION NOW COULD MAKE SUCH A CONTRIBUTION. SOLANO THEN ADDED THAT THERE WAS ALSO AN ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE THAT HELD SPAIN BACK, VIZ., THE OCCUPATION OF TERRITORY BY FORCE. BECAUSE OF SPAIN'S POSITION THAT BRITAIN HOLDS PART OF GIBRALTAR BY FORCE, IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR SPAIN TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL UNTIL PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE ON ISRAEL'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ARAB TERRITORIES IT OCCUPIES. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID, SPAIN LOOKS FORWARD TO A TIME WHEN IT COULD MAKE A HELPFUL MOVE TOWARD RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

5. CHARGE SHOULD CONVEY ESSENCE OF THE FOREGOING TO ALLON OR AVINERI AT NEXT APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY. EMBASSY SHOULD STRESS SENSITIVE NATURE OF U.S. APPROACH TO SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND URGE ISRAELIS TO KEEP THIS FACT CONFIDENTIAL.

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